

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Minvilla  
other names/site number Fifth Avenue Motel; Minvilla Manor

### 2. Location

street & number 447 North Broadway NA ☐ not for publication  
city or town Knoxville NA ☐ vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Knox code 093 zip code 37917

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain:) _____ _____ _____	_____	_____

Minvilla  
Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing

Noncontributing

2

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

2

0

Total

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

### Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

roof OTHER: rubber membrane

other EAST TENNESSEE Marble

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

### Period of Significance

1913 – 1929

### Significant Dates

1913

### Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

### Cultural Affiliation

NA

### Architect/Builder

Baumann Brothers – Architects; Bondurant, H. Clay - Developer  
Brimer & England Brothers - Contractors

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Minvilla  
Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre Knoxville 147 NW

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 236321 3984658  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Hollie Beth Cook – Program Assistant/Researcher  
organization Knox Heritage, Inc date July 14, 2010  
street & number PO Box 1242 telephone (865) 523-8008  
city or town Knoxville state TN zip code 37901

### Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Multiple see attached  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number owners Page 1 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## OWNER/NOMINATION NOTIFICATION CONTACTS

The Industrial Development Board of the City of Knoxville  
c/o The Development Corporation  
17 Market Square #201  
Knoxville, TN 37902-1405  
Attn: Chairman, The Industrial Development Board of the City of Knoxville

Minvilla Manor, L.P.  
Ginny Weatherstone – President  
PO Box 325  
Knoxville, TN 37901

with a copy to:

Long, Ragsdale & Waters, PC  
1111 Northshore Drive, NW  
Suite S-700  
Knoxville, TN 37919-4074  
Attn: R. Culver Schmid, Esq.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Minvilla is located on a prominent southwest corner of N. Broadway and W. Fifth Avenue, two major streets, in Knoxville, Tennessee. Designed by the locally prominent Bauman Brothers architectural firm, the set of two brick buildings was developed and built in 1913 by H. Clay Bondurant, with Brimer & England Brothers as contractors. Currently undergoing rehabilitation, Minvilla was originally developed as two two-story buildings containing thirteen row houses. The rehabilitation will result in fifty-seven apartments; the exterior will retain its historic appearance. (See figures 2-5.) The buildings have Classical Revival elements and are distinguished by canted bays, multi-light windows, and single story porticoes. While once serving as a gateway to suburban growth in Knoxville, today Minvilla is located in a mixed commercial and residential area of the city.

“Building A” originally contained three row houses and faces east on N. Broadway. The larger “Building B” was designed for ten row houses and it faces north on W. Fifth Avenue. Both buildings are load bearing brick, two stories in height on their facades, and with rear entrances into raised basements. Flat roofs are hidden by a low brick parapet wall with a concrete cap and coping and louvered metal attic vents. Below this, on the facades and side elevations, is a sheet metal cornice with dentil trim. The rectangular site is bounded by concrete sidewalks and N. Broadway to the east, W. Fifth Avenue to the north, Queen Street (an alley) to the west, and the Salvation Army complex to the south.

## **Exterior**

### Building A

Building A was designed to be three row houses fronting on N. Broadway. The east facade is marked by three irregular spaced projecting bays which originally delineated each row house. The canted bays have six-over-two double-hung wood windows on the sides on both the first and second stories. The south and north bays on both stories have no window on the façade of the bay, while the center/middle bay contains an eight-over-two double-hung wood window. A six-over-two double-hung wood window separates the south and middle bay and two six-over-two double-hung wood windows separate the middle and north bays. Building A has seven original wood windows on the façade – on the first story there is one original window and it is located on the southernmost corner on the first floor under the portico. On the second story the six remaining original windows are located in the middle and the north corner. All other windows on the façade are replacements. (See figures 14 and 15 for window replacement schedule.) All windows have original limestone sills. Two one-story porticos can be seen on the east façade. The south portico historically was the entry to one row house and the larger north portico originally was the entry to two row houses. Both porticos have flat roofs, square brick columns with capitals, and a wide wood cornice with dentil moldings.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

The south elevation is two stories with a raised basement. The second story has two six-over-two double-hung wood replacement windows and one eight-over-two double-hung wood replacement window. The first story has two six-over-two double-hung wood replacement windows and one eight-over-two double-hung wood replacement window. The raised basement level has five smaller six-over-two double-hung wood replacement windows. The rear west elevation, with raised basement, is delineated by three deep bays that historically represented the three row houses. Also visible on this elevation are the parapets for the firewalls that separated the row houses. Entry into each row house was through a central door on the raised basement level centered in the bay. Today, these openings are flanked by six-over-two replacement aluminum clad wood double-hung windows on the basement level. For safety reasons new doors will be installed and the doors will be sealed shut and will not be used by occupants of Minvilla. Six-over-two replacement aluminum clad wood double-hung windows appear on the first and second stories, centered above the entry, with a metal attic vent centered above the second story window. In order to meet code requirements, the rear elevation will have a new exterior stair installed that will be accessed in the recessed area of the end south rowhouse. This stair will span from the basement story to the second story and will have a low visual impact. The stairs will be placed in an area that historically was one of the recessed areas between two row houses. The north elevation is two stories with a raised basement with two six-over-two double-hung wood windows and one eight-over-two double-hung wood window on the second story. This elevation faces the south rear elevation of the larger Building B. The first story has two six-over-two double-hung windows and one eight-over-two double-hung window. The raised basement level has five smaller windows. This elevation will have a new two-story corridor and an elevator core will be built in the interior linking Building A and Building B. The corridor will be recessed away from the N. Broadway façade to reduce visual impact. The painted brick addition will echo the simplicity of the existing building and will be compatible in scale, size, material, and color of the historic building.

Building B

Building B was designed to be ten row houses fronting W. Fifth Avenue. The north facade is marked by ten projecting bays that originally delineated each row house. The canted bays have three windows on the second story, with a fourth window on the part of the façade that separates the historic row house units. One exception is the west bay, which like the north bay on Building A, has a double portico and two windows on the façade. The majority of the windows on the first story of Building B are history. Only two replacement windows will be used on the first story of the façade; there are two replacement windows on the first story of the east elevation. Historic windows are six-over-two and eight-over-two double-hung wood. All windows have original limestone sills. Twenty-one remaining original windows are located throughout the second level. Replacement windows are double-hung wood and match the historic windows. There are nine one-story porticos on the façade; all but one are marked by a projecting one story portico with a flat roof and square columns and a wide wood projecting cornice with decorative dentil moldings. The larger double portico located on the west corner was historically the entry to two row houses. The west elevation is two stories with a raised basement and an exterior brick chimney. Two six-over-

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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two double-hung wood replacement windows and one eight-over-two double-hung wood replacement window are seen on the first and second stories. The raised basement level has five smaller six-over-two double-hung wood replacement windows.

Similar to Building A, the south rear elevation of Building B is two stories with raised basement level. Each square bay is marked by an entry door into each former row house. The entries are flanked by six-over-two replacement aluminum clad wood double-hung windows. A single six-over-two replacement aluminum clad wood double-hung window appears on the first and second stories centered above the door, with a metal attic vent centered above the second story window. A recessed light well divides the units. In Building B the rear entry doors will be used as entry to the basement one-bedroom apartments. The southwest corner of the lot, located at the rear (south) elevation and side (west) elevation, is marked by a new stair construction near Queen Street in order to have a low visual impact on the structure. The stair is accessed by a covered open air corridor placed in an area that would have historically been a recessed area between two row houses. The painted brick addition echoes the simplicity of the existing buildings and is compatible in scale, size, material and color of the historic buildings. The east elevation of Building B is two stories and it has six original wood double-hung windows. Two of those are on the first story and they are six-over-two double-hung wood windows. The other original windows are three six-over-two double-hung wood windows and one eight-over-two double-hung wood window. All other windows are wood double-hung replacement windows. The cornerstone for the building is located at the northeast corner of this elevation. Following the classical elements of the building, a heavy East Tennessee marble pediment caps rectangular stone that contains the names of the builder, contractor, and architect. The gable field of the pediment contains 1913 in bas relief. Prominently carved in the stone is MINVILLA BUILT BY H. CLAY BONDURANT with a much smaller BRIMER & ENGLAND BROS. CONTRACTORS and BAUMANN BROS. ARCHITECTS.

Prior to restoration, Minvilla's exterior had been altered around 1962 with a one story addition to the façades of both buildings. The porticos were enclosed to create more room in the interior and a large marquee sign with the words "Fifth Avenue Motel" was added, altering the historic appearance of the exterior facades. (See figures 10-12)

Minvilla spent the next forty years as transient and multi-family housing, renamed as the Fifth Avenue Motel. After years of abusive alterations, Minvilla was condemned and vacated in 2002. The property was purchased by Volunteer Ministry Center in 2006 and is currently being rehabilitated and converted into fifty-seven units of permanent supportive housing. The 1962 one-story addition that enclosed the historic porticos and the marquee have been removed and rehabilitation is in progress.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## Interiors of Building A and Building B

When designed and constructed, the interior of Minvilla was thirteen row houses. The entry into each row house lead to a side hall and the front room (parlor) and dining room were located off the side hall. The hall would have aligned with the stair going up to the second story, midway through the row house on the first story. Beyond the dining room were a bathroom and a small space with the kitchen in the rear. The row house plan also included a recessed light well at the rear that permitted better light and air circulation. In the small space in front of the kitchen was a rear door opening and stair that led outside to the rear of the building. Interior finishes would have included fireplaces with mantles and simple interior trim such as cornices, stiles, plinth blocks, and paneled doors. The second story would have been arranged with two or three bedrooms and a bathroom. (See figure 1.)

Prior to the current rehabilitation project, Minvilla's interior had been altered ca. 1962 with the insertion of a double loaded corridor through the brick party walls separating the units side to side. This insertion was located immediately in front of each row house interior stair. The placement of the corridor created four small apartments in the space of each original row house plan. Partitions were inserted, door openings closed and others doors altered. Today, much of the interior work is a work-in-progress in both buildings. The hallways and apartments have been framed-in with drywall, bathroom features have been added, and work on the infrastructure is underway.

### Building A

The first floor of Building A will house the main entry for the complex. The lobby, residence lounge and dinning area, counseling office, small offices, and public restrooms will be constructed on this floor. This area will also have the new corridor/elevator core addition which will connect all stories and Building A with Building B. On the second story of Building A the ca. 1962 corridor will remain, with three efficiency units east of the corridor and three one-bedroom units west of corridor. The basement level will have one efficiency unit in the southeast corner, two maintenance rooms east of the corridor, and three one-bedroom units west of the corridor.

### Building B

Building B will retain the central ca. 1962 corridor on the first and second floors. The first story will also house the new main stair and receiving area and a janitor's closet for the complex. This stair will be located in the rear half of one of the former row houses. The first floor of Building B will have ten efficiency units north of the corridor and nine one-bedroom units south of the corridor. The second floor will echo that of the first floor with nine one-bedroom units and ten efficiency units. The individual row house interior stairways have suffered decades of abuse and loss. In recognition of the original interior stair on the first floor of Building B, a three-tread portion of the original nine stairs will remain to visually assist in telling the history of the building. The other remaining stairs and handrails needed to be removed due to current building code requirements.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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The original stringer will remain against the row house demising wall. The basement level of Building B will have nine one-bedroom units that will be accessible by exterior doors in the rear. The basement will also house a laundry and utility room

All of the interior details will be reused or replaced to include wood trim, window and door trim openings, and base molding. None of the original doors were wide enough to meet current building codes and none were fire resistant. These doors were donated to Knox Heritage to be used in their salvage operation to ensure preservation and possible reuse. New doors will be installed in walls that are original or might have been original and they will be two panel doors to match the originals. Where doors have been installed in new walls the doors will be flush solid core wood. This pattern of door installation will assist in telling the history of Minvilla.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

## Original Floor Plans, Units 1 and 2

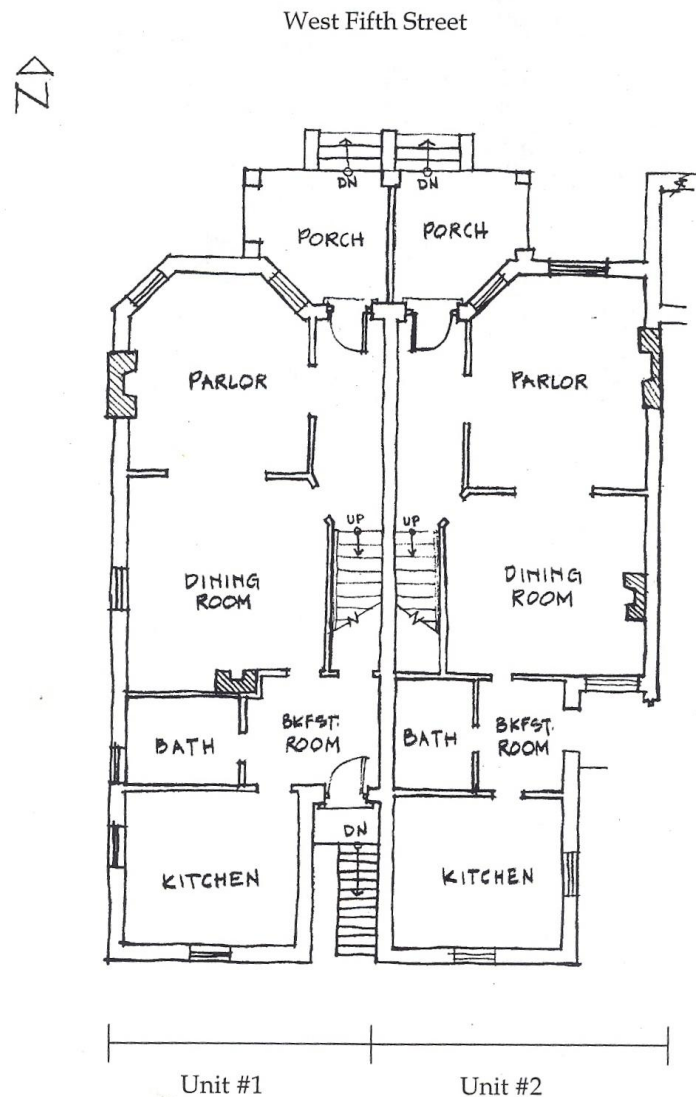


Figure 1. Sketch of floor plans for two units on West Fifth from 2004 Part 1 tax credit application by Hopkins and Associates

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

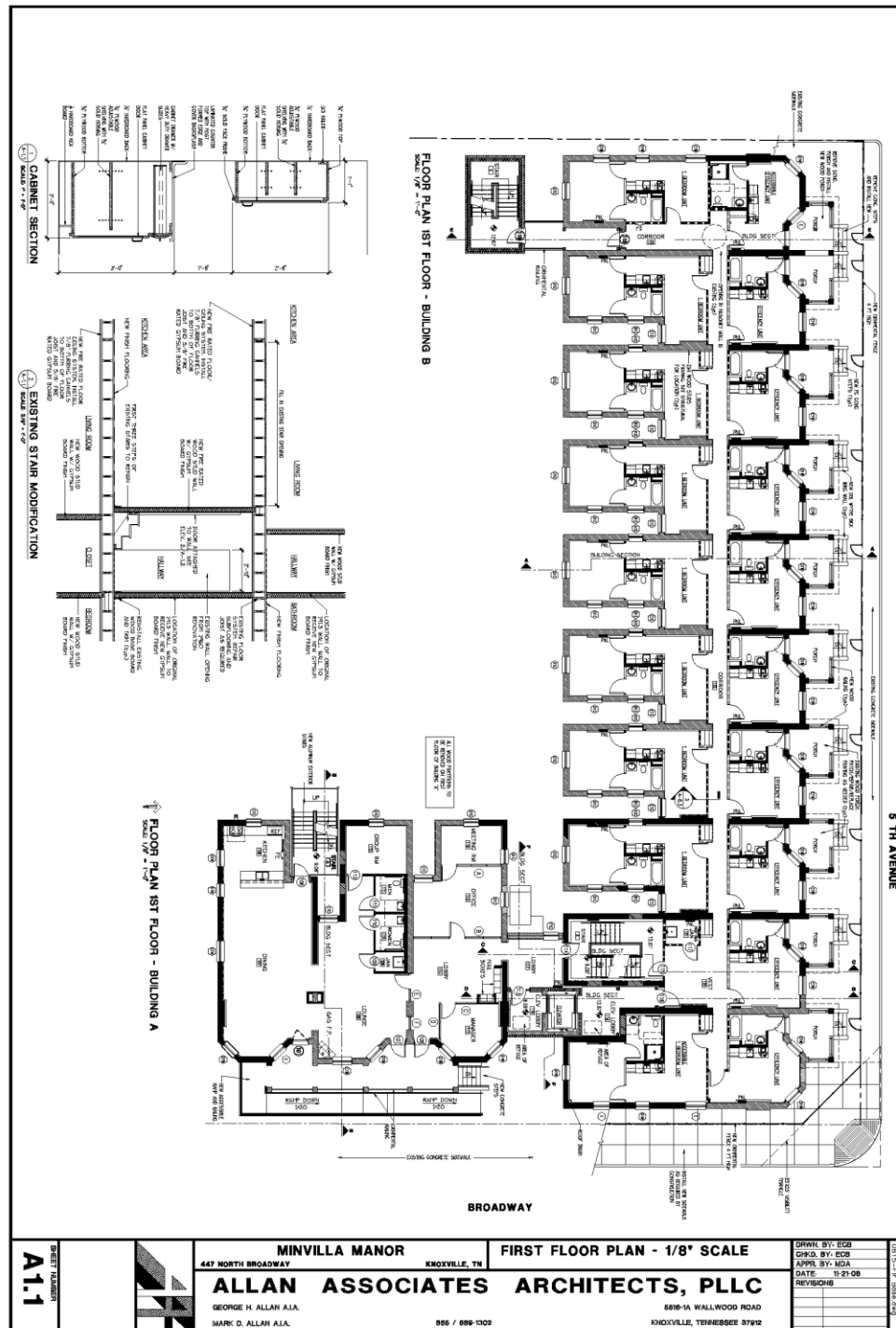


Figure 2. Reduced scale first floor plan from 2008 preservation tax incentives Part 2.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

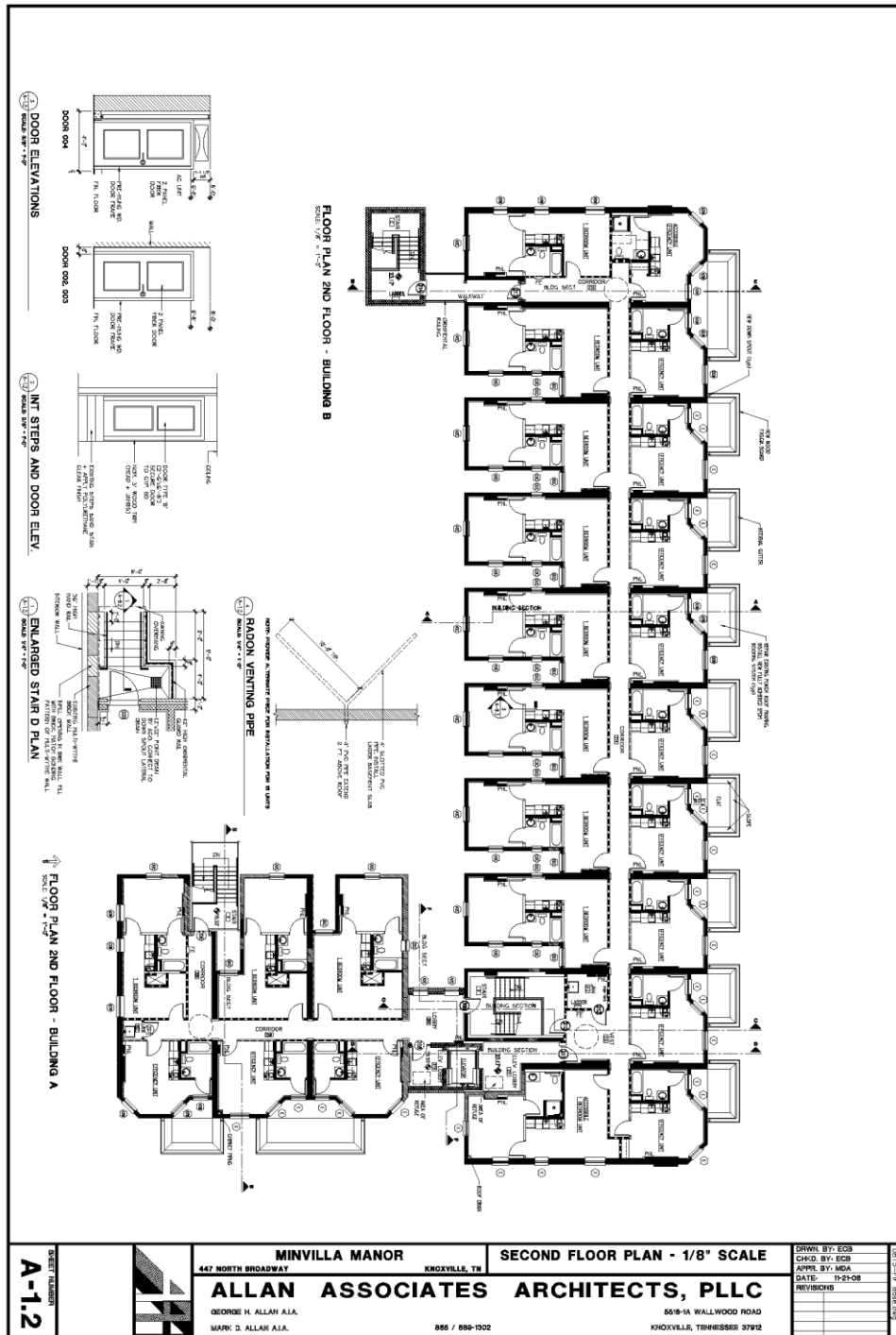


Figure 3. Reduced scale second floor plan from 20008 preservation tax incentives Part 2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

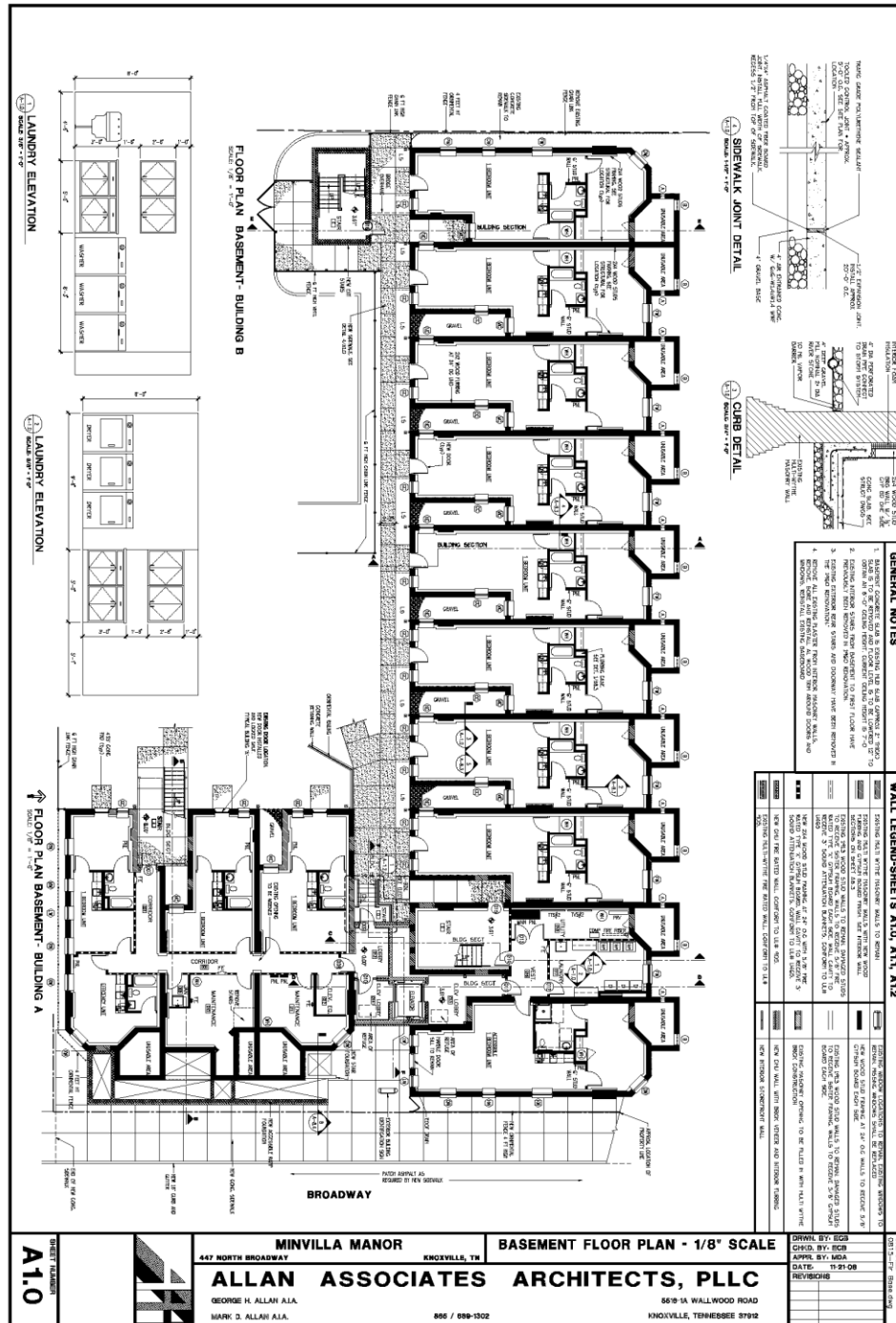


Figure 4. Reduced scale basement floor plan from 2008 preservation tax incentives Part 2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

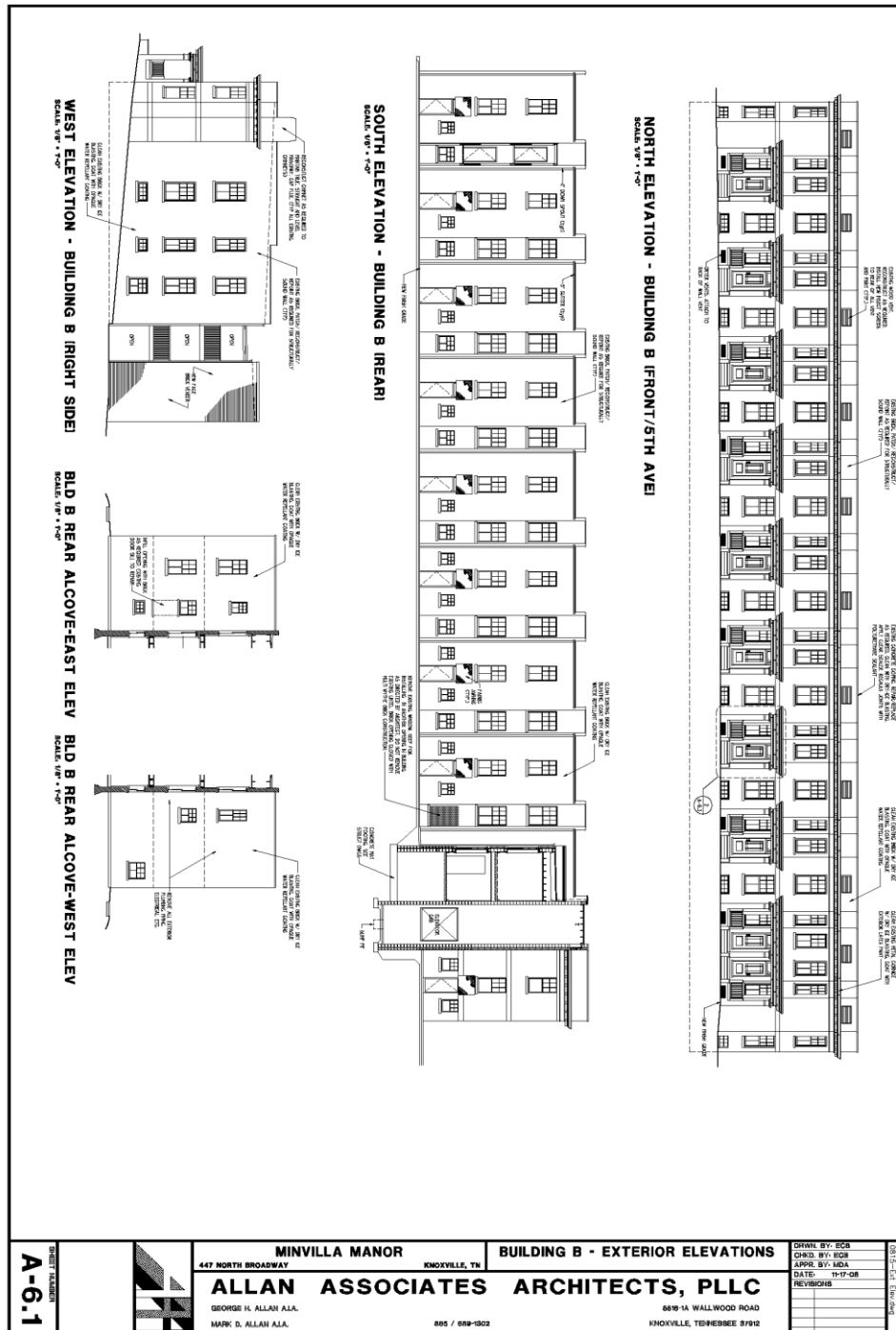


Figure 5. Reduced scale elevation for "Building B" from 2008 preservation tax incentives Part 2

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

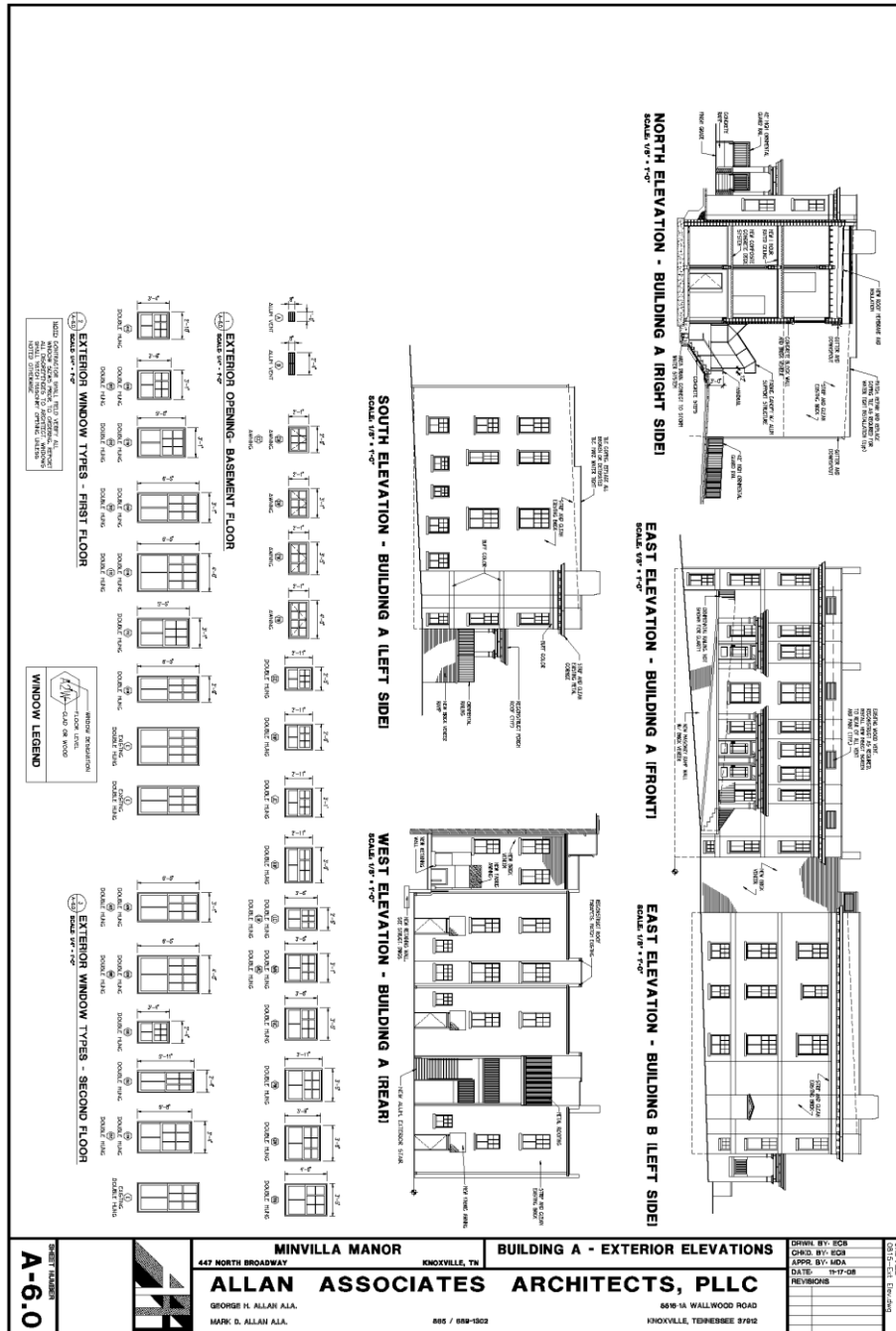


Figure 6. Reduced scale elevation for "Building A" from 2008 preservation tax incentives Part 2



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Minvilla is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its local significance in community planning and development in Knoxville, Tennessee. Knoxville developer H. Clay Bondurant was the impetus for Minvilla. He had the complex designed by the Knoxville architectural firm of Baumann Brothers and built by the Knoxville construction firm of Brimer and England Brothers in 1913. The buildings are significant from the time of construction in 1913 to the start of the Great Depression in 1929. Minvilla is a representation of middle-class suburban housing that developed in the early twentieth century along major streetcar routes in Knoxville. Commercial growth in this part of the city was expanding during the early part of the twentieth century, resulting in an expanded streetcar system. This commercial growth and better transportation gave rise to emerging residential neighborhoods. Minvilla is a good example of the type of residential community development that occurred in this part of Knoxville. The complex retains its integrity.

As documented in the Multiple Property Submission for the "Historic and Architectural Resources of Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee" (accepted 08/11/1994), by 1913 suburban growth was well established in Knoxville.<sup>1</sup> This suburban growth was supported by the establishment of public transportation in the form of streetcar development. More than any other factor influencing the spreading of residential development and the adjacent commercial development that served it, transportation (first streetcars and later the automobile) shaped Knoxville's future suburban growth.<sup>2</sup> Knoxville's first mechanized streetcar was developed in 1890 by the Fountain Head Railway Company; it was called the Dummy Line. The Dummy Line began at Emory Place, one block north of Minvilla on Broadway (Emory Place Historic District – NR 11/10/94). From Emory Place the Dummy Line traveled generally northward, deviating slightly to the west and then to the east to serve burgeoning suburbs developing in its path.<sup>3</sup> The steam-powered Dummy Line gave way to more economical and reliable electric streetcars in 1905. Almost immediately after the establishment of the Dummy Line, people started moving away from the center city. The commercial hub of Emory Place, streetcar lines, and rapidly forming neighborhoods made Minvilla and its sister apartment complex across Broadway, the Magnolia<sup>4</sup>, the gateway to suburban growth that was taking place to the north and east.

The row house was an uncommon construction form in Knoxville. A review of Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for 1917 show that there were only ten such complexes of three or more units standing within the city at that time, most concentrated either at the fringes of the downtown area,

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<sup>1</sup> Because the Multiple Property Submission did not discuss multi-family housing, this property is not being added to it.

<sup>2</sup> Ann Bennett. "Historic and Architectural Resources of Knoxville and Knox County, TN" National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, 1996, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 19.

<sup>4</sup> The Magnolia apartments are still standing but have been modified from their original appearance and are not eligible for the National Register.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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or in the immediate vicinity of Minvilla. (See figures 8 and 9.) Of these ten, only three – the Ross Flats on W. Church, the Troy Court on Queen's Alley adjacent to Minvilla, and Minvilla itself were developed for upper-middle class income occupants. Of those three row house developments, only Minvilla survives today. Other complexes of row house rental units that existed then or developed in the years after were apartment blocks, boarding houses, or residential hotels. There is one other remaining row house complex as large as Minvilla, the Masonic Court (Kendrick Place). Masonic Court also retains its sense of architectural integrity, but while Masonic Court (ca. 1915 -1916) shares a similar degree of architectural integrity and has similar architectural character, it has a different development history than Minvilla. Masonic Court was a unique development even among its contemporaries – two rows of seven row houses facing each other across a one-lane street, located downtown. Its location and size attracted its occupants, who were lower-middle income residents living in downtown, where they walked to their jobs.<sup>5</sup>

The tenant makeup of Minvilla in 1914, the first year residences were occupied, includes mostly upper-middle class income tenants. Two physicians, a cabinetmaker, bank employees, wholesale store managers, and two Southern Railway conductors were noted as living there. The tenant makeup remained relatively the same for the first fifteen years, but with the start of the Great Depression in 1929 Minvilla began to see a change in its residents. Now, the majority of tenants were working-income residents like traveling salesmen and auto repairmen. By the early to mid-1930s Minvilla was becoming marginal housing and was a less desirable residence. Middle-income Knoxvilleans were moving further out of the city to the automobile suburbs that began developing in 1927 and 1928. The tenants who lived at Minvilla in the 1940s and early 1950s continued to increase the trend towards lower income residents. By the early 1950s Minvilla was converted into office use. Around 1962, a one story concrete block façade with aluminum marquee was added to expand interior space. Other interior alterations turned the buildings into a collection of small apartments. At this time Minvilla was used primarily as transient or multi-family housing and renamed Fifth Avenue Motel. (See figure 10.) In 2002, after years of abuse from its low-income tenants Minvilla was condemned and vacated.

The developer of Minvilla was H. Clay Bondurant (1846-1918). Bondurant was a prominent businessman, religious leader, and real estate investor in Knoxville. Bondurant was born in August 1846 in Salem, Virginia, and moved to Knoxville around 1871. Within his first year in Knoxville, Bondurant was associated with a business called W.B. Williams & Company. This company would later be known as Smith & Bondurant, and Bondurant remained connected to the business for twenty years.<sup>6</sup> In the 1880s he became involved in Knoxville Meat & Sugar Company, where he owned stock and was the business manager of the company. In 1909, Bondurant founded a wholesale grocery business, H.C. Bondurant & Company; he was the owner of 75% of the company stock.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"H.C. Bondurant Dies Saturday." *The Knoxville Journal*, December 22, 1918, Obituaries.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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In 1913 Bondurant purchased vacant buildings at the corner of Gay Street and Fifth Avenue and at Fifth Avenue and Broadway, where he built the Minvilla and Magnolia apartment houses. The purchase of vacant and deteriorated buildings that could be demolished to make way for new middle and upper class residences was a common theme for Bondurant. In at least one instance, Bondurant hired one of the most respected Knoxville architectural firms, Baumann Brothers, to design the complexes, and hired the popular contracting firm of Brimer & England Brothers to build them. Bondurant not only was a housing developer but also owned a large stock of real estate investments in Knoxville, including commercial buildings and dwellings throughout the city.<sup>8</sup>

Minvilla was designed by the Knoxville architectural firm of Baumann Brothers. Brothers Joseph F. and Albert B. Baumann Sr. practiced architecture in Knoxville from 1887 until 1913.<sup>9</sup> Minvilla's construction date of 1913 is interesting in considering the history of Baumann Brothers. Minvilla must have been one of the last commissions of the firm. The firm was founded by older brother Joseph F. Baumann in the early 1870s. By 1872, Joseph was advertising himself as an architect, and some of Joseph's early commissions include many residences for prominent Knoxville residents.

In early 1882, younger brother Albert B. Baumann, Sr. joined his brother's firm as an apprentice. In 1887, Albert Sr. became a full partner and the firm became officially known as Baumann Brothers.<sup>10</sup> Research indicates that the Baumann Brothers designed many types of buildings including commercial structures, schools, churches, courthouses, hospitals, and residences.<sup>11</sup> Nearly 300 residential structures in Knoxville alone have been attributed to the Baumann Brothers; many in the Fort Sanders Historic District (NR 09/16/80). The Baumann Brothers firm is also credited with designing Knoxville High School in 1909-1910 (Emory Place Historic District - NR 11/10/94), Church of the Immaculate Conception in 1883-1884, and the 1876 Kern Building (Market Square Commercial Historic District - NR 12/20/84). The brothers stopped working together sometime in 1913, and Joseph died in 1920. Albert B. Baumann, Sr. practiced architecture under his own name until 1922 when a new partnership was formed with his son, Albert B. Baumann, Jr. (known as A.B.) under the name of Baumann & Baumann. The father and son firm continued to practice architecture until Albert Sr. died in 1942. A.B. continued to practice architecture until his death in 1952. Baumann & Baumann are credited with the design of the Knoxville Post Office (NR - 05/31/84), the Andrew Johnson Hotel (NR 07/09/80), and the Benjamin Morton House (NR 11/10/04).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> "H.C. Bondurant Dies Saturday." *The Knoxville Journal*, December 22, 1918, Obituaries. Additional research is needed to determine if the Bauman firm designed other buildings for Bondurant.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Ann Jeffries, "The Baumann Brothers, Knoxville Architects, 1887-1913," *Knoxville Heritage, Inc. Newsnotes*, Winter 1991, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Recent research has uncovered new history of the Baumann Brothers firm and these statements reflect that new information.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 16 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Minvilla was built by the Knoxville construction firm of Brimer & England Brothers. The history of Brimer & England Brothers starts with the founding of the firm in 1904 by Joseph England and brother-in-law, David W. Brimer. In 1907, Joseph England's brother Benjamin R. England joined the firm after moving from Boston. In 1917, Joseph England retired and Benjamin England and David Brimer continued as Brimer & England.<sup>13</sup> David Brimer died in 1920 and Benjamin England continued working in construction until 1933 when he became a home appraiser for a company called Home Owners Corporation.<sup>14</sup> In 1938, Benjamin England became the building inspector for the city of Knoxville. Benjamin England was a member of Church Street United Methodist Church (NR 03/10/09) and served on the building committee during its construction. Brimer & England Brothers are credited with many of Knoxville's early twentieth century buildings. Some of the firm's projects include the original 1905 section of the Miller's Building (Gay Street Commercial Historic District NR 11/04/86), S.H. Kress Building (Gay Street Commercial Historic District NR 11/04/86), McClung Warehouses (Southern Terminal and Warehouse Historic District NR 11/18/1985), Standard Knitting Mill, and the 1906 Blount County Court House. Minvilla was built at a time when Brimer & England Brothers were well-known Knoxville contractors.

Minvilla is unique in Knoxville. It is significant for its representation of early twentieth century suburban housing. Minvilla provides a link between downtown Knoxville and the streetcar neighborhoods to the north of the city, and embodies the elements of residential development symbolic of Knoxville's suburban growth as the gateway to those neighborhoods. The buildings are being rehabilitated using the preservation tax incentives. Work includes rebuilding porticoes; rehabilitating historic windows and using new ones where needed; cleaning, tuck pointing, and painting brickwork; adding a handicap ramp and elevator; remodeling the interior.

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<sup>13</sup> "Builders of Knoxville – Benjamin R. England." *The Knoxville Journal*, June 3, 1925.

<sup>14</sup> "Church Is My Memorial – Benjamin R. England Dies at 84." *Knoxville News Sentinel*, March 23, 1950, Obituaries.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 17 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Minvilla is contained on the tax parcel known as CLT 094EN016, which is the historic and current boundary of the property.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 18 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Figure 7.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 19 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 20 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photo by: Hollie Cook  
Date: August 2010  
Digital image: Tennessee Historical Commission

Photo 1 of 22  
North facade Building B, facing southeast

Photo 2 of 22  
East facade Building A, new corridor, east elevation of Building B, facing northwest

Photo 3 of 22  
Detail of new corridor between Building A & Building B, facing west

Photo 4 of 22  
Cornerstone on Building A at northeast corner

Photo 5 of 22  
5West elevation Building B showing original building and new stair exit, facing northeast

Photo 6 of 22  
West (rear) elevation Building A, facing east

Photo 7 of 22  
South (rear) elevation Building B, facing north

Photo 8 of 22  
Interior first floor Building A, northeast corner, facing west

Photo 9 of 22  
Interior first floor Building A, southwest corner, facing east

Photo 10 of 22  
Interior corridor second floor, facing south

Photo 11 of 22  
Interior second floor, one bedroom apartment Building A, facing west

Photo 12 of 22  
Interior second floor, efficiency apartment Building A, facing west



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 21 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Photo 13 of 22

Interior basement, one bedroom apartment Building A, facing east

Photo 14 of 22

Interior basement, efficiency apartment Building A, facing east

Photo 15 of 22

Interior elevator lobby new corridor on second floor, facing south

Photo 16 of 22

Interior stair corridor, second floor to first floor, facing north

Photo 17 of 22

Interior corridor, first floor, facing east

Photo 18 of 22

Interior showing three historic steps

Photo 19 of 22

Interior first floor, one bedroom apartment Building B, facing north

Photo 20 of 22

Interior first floor, efficiency apartment Building B, facing west

Photo 21 of 22

Interior corridor on second floor, Building B, facing west

Photo 22 of 22

Interior basement, one bedroom apartment Building B, facing west

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 22 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

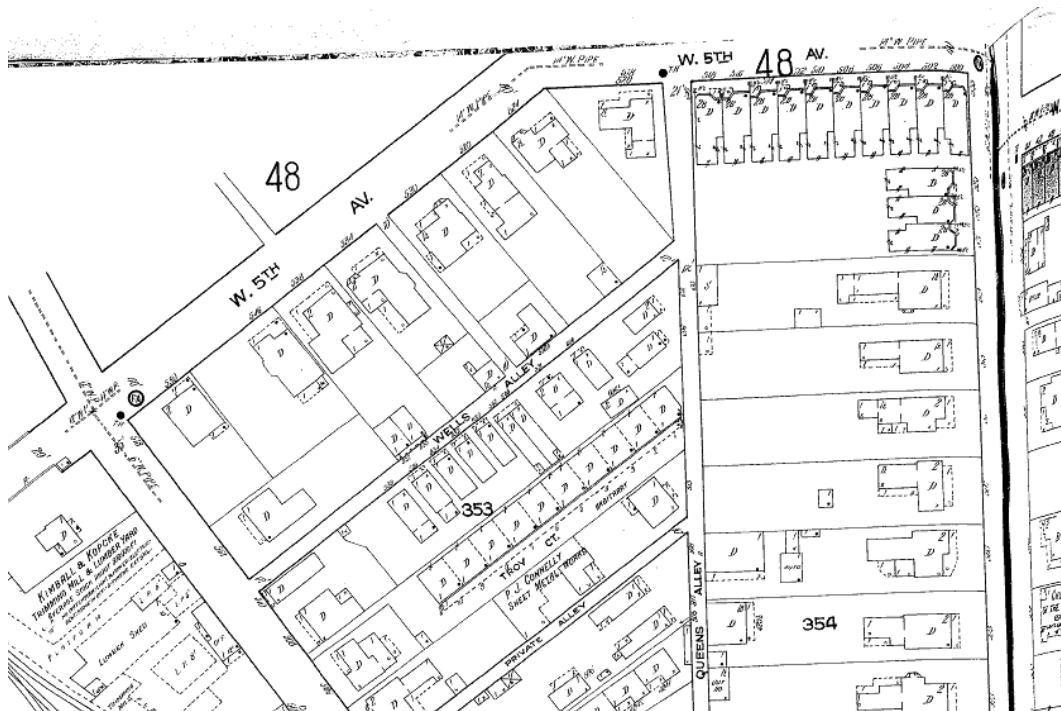


Figure 8. Knoxville 1917-1924 vol. 1, 1917, Sheet 39  
<http://sanborn.umi.com/tn> accessed June 14, 2010

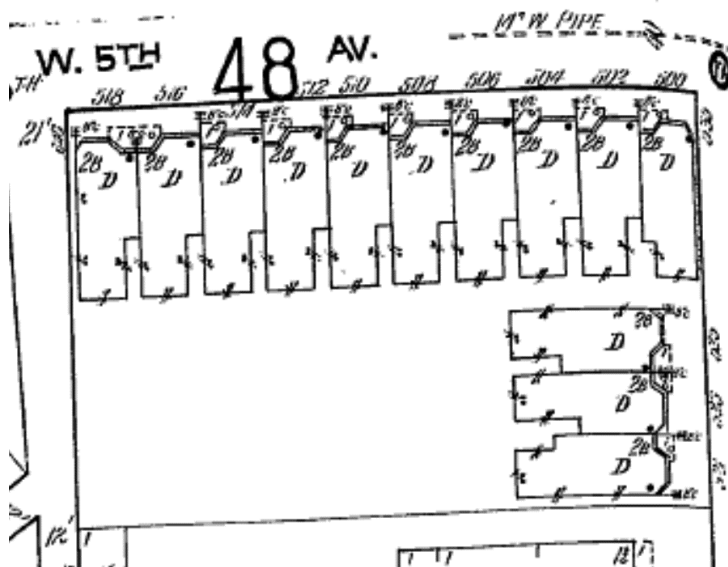


Figure 9. Knoxville 1917-1924 vol. 1, 1917, Sheet 39- detail  
<http://sanborn.umi.com/tn> accessed June 14, 2010

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 23 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

---



500-518 W. Fifth Avenue.

Figure 10. 1993 image of property when it was the Fifth Avenue Motel. From "Historic and Architectural Inventory, Tennessee Department of Transportation I-40 Improvements, Knoxville, Tennessee" by Thomason and Associates



Figure 11. 2004 photo of work in progress. Photo by Claudette Stager

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 24 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Figures 12 and 13. 2004 photos of work in progress. Photos by Claudette Stager

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number	figures	Page	25	Minvilla Knox County, Tennessee
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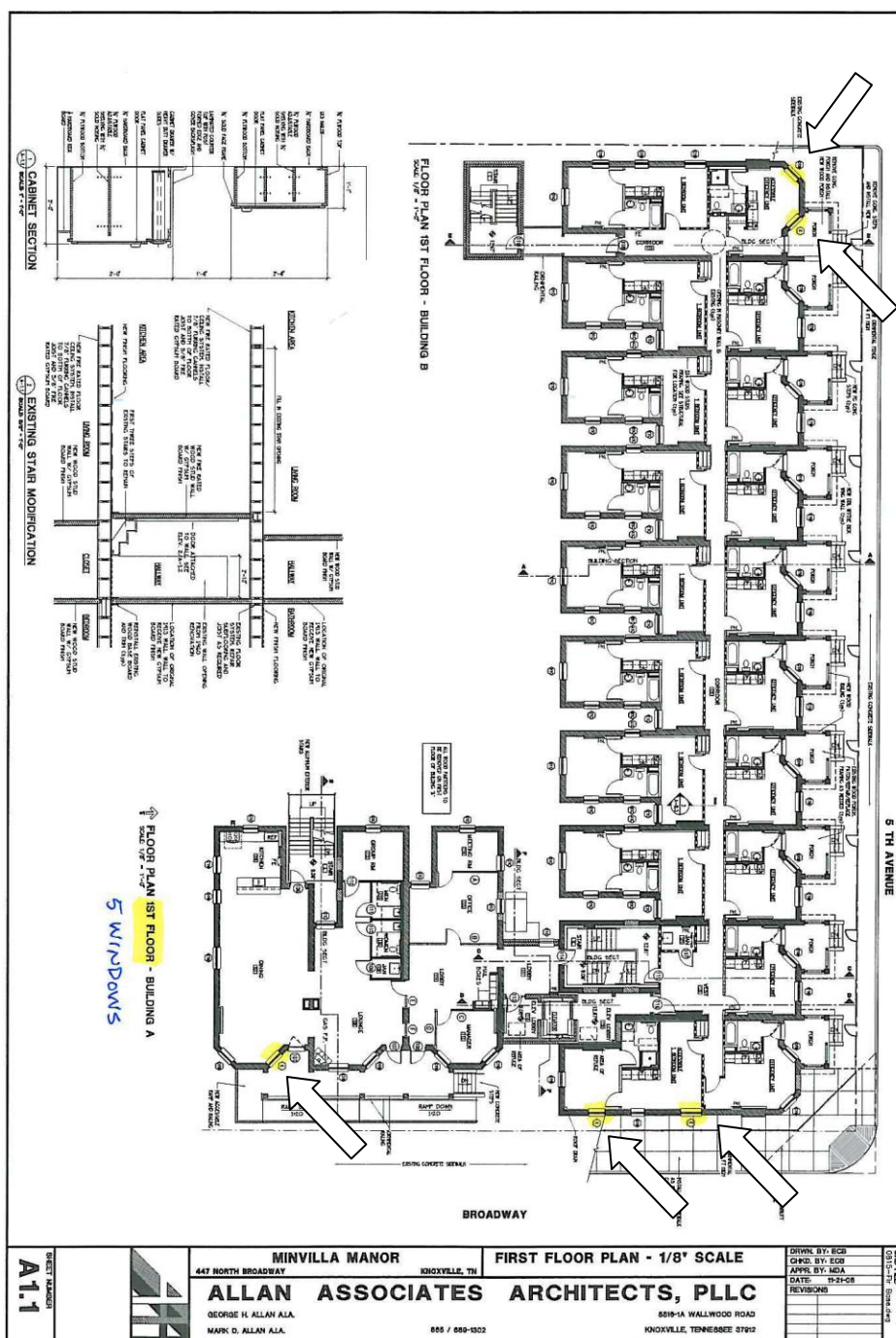


Figure 14. First story window replacement schedule.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number figures Page 26 Minvilla  
Knox County, Tennessee

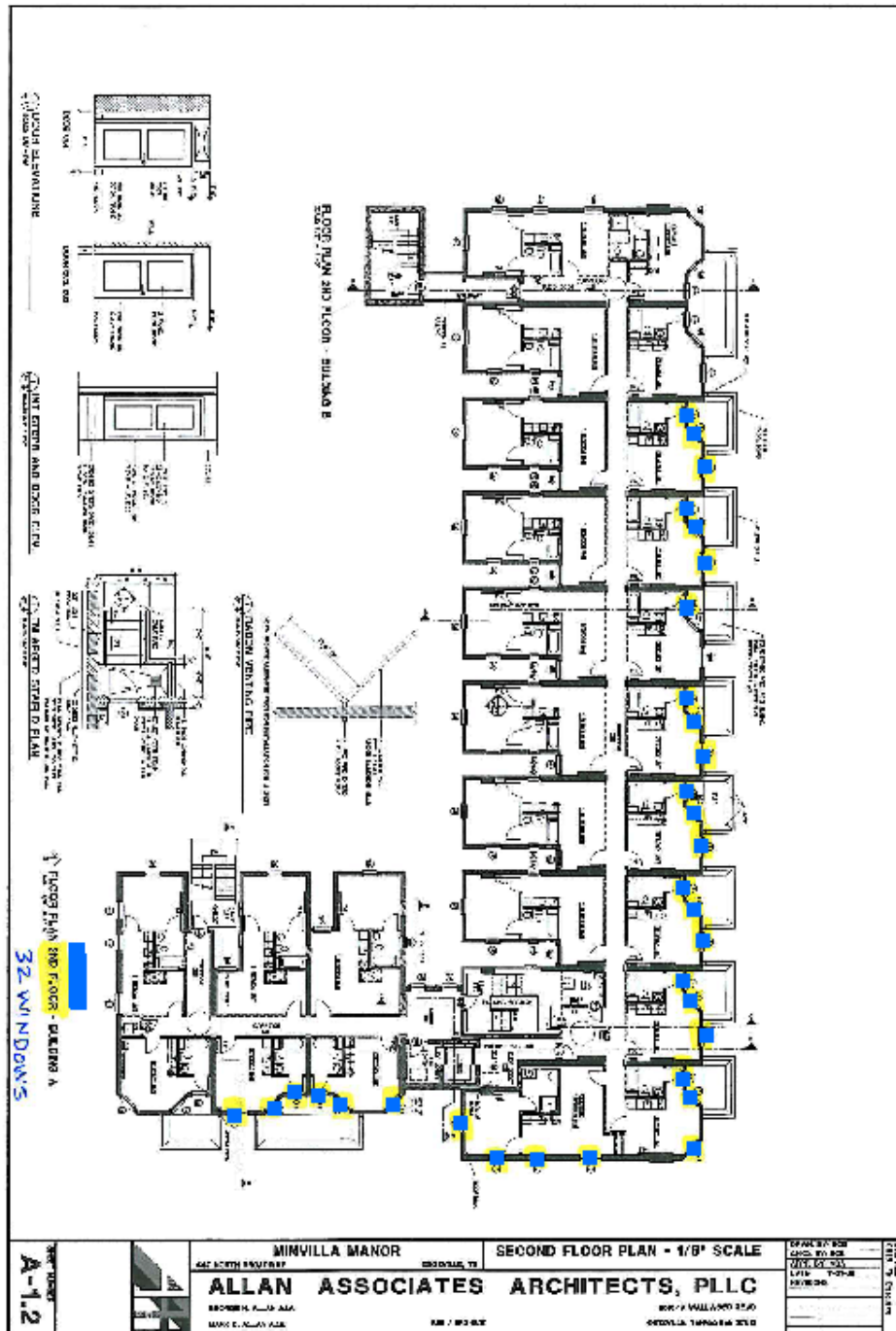


Figure 15. Second story window replacement schedule.